Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a tact that the country's foreign exchange re serves dropped to the tune of Rs. 1036.22 crores by the end of De cember 1989;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps during the last three months to maintain its foreign exchange reserves; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDA-VATE): (a) India's foreign exchange reserves (excluding gold, Special Drawing Rights and working ba-lanses held by the Government) which stood at Rs. 6604.63 crores as on 1-4-89 decreased by Rs. 1327.33 crores to Rs. 5277.30 crores on 31-12-89.

(b) and (c) Steps have been taken to maintain the foreign exchange reserves position by initiating a number of measures to promote expoits and curtail in essential imports. Attempts are being made to augment foreign exchange earnings throug-i invisible earnings and capital inflows, including external assistance disbursements

Payment of DA to the Central Government Employees

341. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR :

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH :

Will the Minister of FINANCE bs phased to state:

(a) whvthcr it is a fact that the wholesale price index for all commodities has climbed upward during tho last six months;

(b) if so, what arc the details in this regard;

(c) whither it is also a fact that with the increase in price-index the dearnnss allowances to the Central Government employees has become due with effect from 1st January, 1990; and

(d) if so, by wh<~.n Government propose to announce the D.A. to the Central Government employees ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDA-VATE) : (a) and (b) The movement of Wholesale Pries index(1981-82=100) for the period Ji!ly-Dcc. 1989 was as under : —

Month ending	W.P.I. (1981-82 = 100)
July, 1989	164-5
August, 1989	167' 1
September, 1989	167-9
October, 1989	167-9
November, 1989	167-3
December, 1989	166-4

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Orders in this regard will be issued shortly.

Foreign Exchange released for import of books

342. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the amount of foreign exchange released for the import of book' during the lasi year ;

(b) whether it has come to the no[f]ice of Government that certain

importers buy boots at throw-away prices but over-invoicing the sab by quoting th? cover price and get higher amount of foreign exchange released; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) Th-. Informa.;io.i is being colkcted and will be laid on the Tabic of the House.

(b) Yc., Sir.

(c) The Direc! orate of Enforcemant have initiated investigations under tin provisions of F.E.R. Act, 1973 against seven importers who had indulged in ovw-invoicing of imports of books by quoting the cover price.

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Payment of rent for hiring a tank by the STC

343. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to stats:

(a) whether it is a fa,ct thai an *i* mount of Rs. 1.2 lakhs has been paid by the State Trading Corporation of Indu; to an edibh oil handling agent in Delhi as rent charges for a tank which the Corporation iid not hire for the period from August 1986 to Avgu.it 1987;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the agent was also favoured by waiving of Corporation's stipula-ions on edible oil handling rcsult-ng in losses amounting to mor" b/\n Rs. 4 lakhs;

(c) whether Government have inquired into the matter to fix responsibility; and

(d) if so, what is the outcome thereof and what action hts bsen taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRl ARUN KUMAP NEHRU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No Sir. The excess handling loss initially worked out by STC amounted to Rs. 4.53 lakhs. This was contested by the Handling Agent (HA) which on reachecking was found within the . permissible limits, Thr amount withheld on the basis of initial calculation was released consequently.

(c) and (d) In view of the reply at (a) and (b) above the question does not arise.

Economic offences against former President, NCCF

344. S.HRI VIRENDRA VERMA: SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV :

Will the Minister of FINANCE b; pleased to refer to the replies to Unstarred Question 2?81, 1585, 2565 and 3391 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th S;ptcmbor, 1986, 10th May, 1988, 1st December, 1988 anc[1] 27th April, 1989 respectively and state:

(a) whether the Income Tax De-. partnnnt has since completed the indepth investigations and finalised assessments pertaining to huge properties worth crores of rupees owned by the former President, NCCF (i.e. "Simrat Hotel", Patna, "Cold Storage" at Danapur, Bihar, "Rice Mill"" at An ah and two Guest Houses, namaly "Shyanu International Inn" at Safdarjang Enclave, New Delhi and "Sun V i-t-ge" near Mool Chand Crossing R ,g Road, NiW Delhi etc.) ;

(b) if so, what are the details of the findings and what action has been taken against lh.5 guilty for evasion of Government taxes; and